

REMARKS

Claims 21, 23 to 27, 51, 53 to 57 and 64 are pending in the application, with Claims 1 to 20, 22, 28 to 50, 52 and 58 to 63 having been cancelled, and with Claims 21, 23, 51, 53 and 64 having been amended herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4, 31 to 34 and 61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,579,516 (Van Maren) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,530,856 (Dahod); Claims 5 to 12, 35 to 42 and 62 were rejected under § 103(a) over Van Maren in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,105,022 (Takahashi); Claims 13, 14, 17 to 29, 43, 44 and 47 to 50 were rejected under § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,987,506 (Carter); Claims 15, 16, 45 and 46 were rejected under § 103(a) over Carter in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,937,409 (Wetherbee); Claims 21 to 27, 51 to 57 and 64 were rejected under § 103(a) over Carter in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,590 (Chidlovskii); and Claims 28 to 30 and 58 to 60 were rejected under § 103(a) over Van Maren in view of Dahod, and further in view of Takahashi. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the cancellation herein of Claims 1 to 20, 22, 28 to 50, 52 and 58 to 63 render moot the foregoing claim rejections except for the rejection of Claims 21 to 27, 51 to 57 and 64 under § 103(a) over Carter in view of Chidlovskii.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as set forth below.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 21 is directed to a data processing method which includes the steps of reading data files belonging to an indicated directory, extracting meta-data from the data files read in the reading step, generating meta-data for the directory by using a meta-data item having content which is common to all of the meta-data extracted in the extracting step, and

attaching the meta-data generated in the generating step to directory data as meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory.

In this manner, meta-data for a directory is generated by using a meta-data item of which the content is common to all of the meta-data attached to data files belonging to the directory, and the generated directory meta-data is attached to directory data of the directory. (See Fig. 14, steps 2401 and 2402). Accordingly, the search area can be quickly narrowed because the search operation can be performed in units of a directory. (See specification, page 28, lines 14 to 21).

The applied art, namely Carter and Chidlovskii, is not seen to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of amended independent Claim 21, particularly with respect to at least the features of generating meta-data for the directory by using a meta-data item having content which is common to all of the meta-data extracted in the extracting step, and attaching the meta-data generated in the generating step to directory data as meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory.

In this regard, Carter is seen to be directed to a system which uses a plurality of networked computers to access data based on a global address scheme. (Carter, abstract; Fig. 7; column 2, lines 55 to 67; and column 3, lines 1 to 64). Carter is seen to teach that reconciliation log entries contain inode information which can be extracted from a directory file of the directory in which the directory file is located, and that data is generated based on a directory file and added to a data file. (Carter, column 36, lines 42 to 63). However, as admitted in the Office Action, nowhere is Carter seen to teach generating meta-data for the directory by using a meta-data item having content which is common to all of the extracted meta-data. Accordingly, Applicants further submit that Carter cannot

be seen to teach attaching the generated meta-data to directory data as meta-data corresponding to a file belonging to the directory.

The Office Action relies on Chidlovskii to allegedly remedy the deficiencies of Carter. In general, Chidlovskii is seen to be directed to a system for performing searches of information, wherein the search results are ranked in accordance with the context of the search query. (Chidlovskii, abstract; Fig. 2; and column 2, lines 34 to 64). Chidlovskii is seen to teach generating meta-data, but only for use by the profilers to construct and update the user profiles. (Chidlovskii, column 5, lines 8 to 32). However, nowhere is Chidlovskii seen to generate meta-data for a *directory*, much less to generate the meta-data by using a *meta-data item having content which is common to all of the extracted meta-data*.

Accordingly, Chidlovskii is simply not seen to teach the meta-data generation step of the present invention.

"To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." M.P.E.P. § 2143. Applicants submit, based on the foregoing, that even if Carter and Chidlovskii were combined, for which combination no motivation or suggestion is seen to be provided in the references, such a combination would not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations of amended independent Claim 21.

Accordingly, amended independent Claim 21 is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. In addition, amended independent

Claims 51 and 64 are directed to a data processing device and a memory medium, respectively, both of which substantially include similar features as those of amended independent Claim 21. Accordingly, amended independent Claims 51 and 64 are also believed to be in condition for allowance for the same reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 21.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicants

Registration No. 40,595

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-2200
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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